

REMARKS

After entry of this Amendment, the pending claims are: claims 1-8, 13-21, 23-25, 53-58, 60, 62-66 and 69-71. The Office Action dated October 15, 2007 has been carefully considered. As an initial matter, the Examiner is thanked for allowance of claims 1-8, 13-21 and 69-71. The Examiner is also thanked for the indication of allowable subject matter in claims 61 and 62. Independent claim 23 has been amended to include all of the limitations of dependent claim 62. Independent claim 53 has been amended to include all of the limitations of dependent claim 61. Claims 27, 59, 61, 67, 68 and 72-74 have been canceled. Claims 9-12, 22, 26 and 28-52 were previously canceled. Claims 23, 53, 60 and 62 have been amended in this Response. No new matter has been added. Reconsideration and allowance of the present application in view of the above Amendments and the following Remarks is respectfully requested.

In the Office Action dated October 15, 2007, the Examiner:

- rejected claims 23-25, 53-55, 58, 63, 65-67 and 72 under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 5,458,638 to Kuslich *et al.* (“Kuslich”);
- rejected claims 53 and 56 under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 5,026,373 to Ray *et al.* (“Ray”);
- rejected claims 57, 73 and 74 under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Kuslich;
- rejected claims 27 and 59 under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Kuslich in further view of U.S. Patent No. 6,258,125 to Paul *et al.* (“Paul”);

- rejected claim 60 under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Kuslich in further view of U.S. Patent No. 6,258,125 to Paul et al. (“Paul”);
- rejected claim 68 under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Kuslich;
- objected to claims 61 and 62 as being dependent on a rejected base claim. Otherwise the subject matter of claims 61 and 62 would be allowable if rewritten in independent claim form to include all of the limitation of the base claim and any intervening claims; and
- Allowed claims 1-8, 13-21 and 69-71.

INDICATION OF ALLOWABILITY OF DEPENDENT CLAIMS 61 AND 62

The Examiner is thanked for the indication of allowable subject matter in claims 61 and 62. Specifically, dependent claims 61 and 62 were objected to as being dependent on a rejected base claim. Otherwise the subject matter of claims 61 and 62 was deemed allowable if rewritten in independent claim form to include all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

Independent claim 23 was rejected as being anticipated by Kuslich. Independent claim 23, which is substantially similar to independent claim 53, has been amended to include all of the limitations of dependent claim 62 including intervening claim 59. As such, it is respectfully submitted that independent claim 23 is allowable over the cited prior art. Withdrawal of this rejection and allowance of independent claim 23 is respectfully requested.

Furthermore, as claims 24 and 25 all depend from independent claim 23, it is submitted that these claims are equally allowable. Withdrawal of these rejections and allowance of claims 24 and 25 is also respectfully requested.

Similarly, independent claim 53 was rejected as being anticipated by Kuslich. In addition, independent claim 53 was rejected as being anticipated by Ray. Independent claim 53 has been amended to include all of the limitations of dependent claim 61 including intervening claim 59. As such, it is respectfully submitted that independent claim 53 is allowable over the cited prior art. Withdrawal of this rejection and allowance of independent claim 53 is respectfully requested.

Furthermore, as claims 54-58, 60 and 62-66 all depend from independent claim 53, it is submitted that these claims are equally allowable. Withdrawal of these rejections and allowance of claims 54-58, 60 and 63-66 is also respectfully requested.

CONCLUSION

No fee is believed due for this submission. If, however, the Commissioner determines otherwise, the Commissioner is authorized to charge any fees which may now or hereafter be due in this application to Deposit Account No. 19-4709.

In the event that there are any questions, or should additional information be required, please contact Applicants' attorney at the number listed below.

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Respectfully submitted,

/Giuseppe Molaro/
Giuseppe Molaro
Registration No. 52,039

For: Brian M. Rothery
Registration No. 35,340

Attorney for Applicants
Stroock & Stroock & Lavan LLP
180 Maiden Lane
New York, New York 10038
(212) 806-6114